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1 August 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of State

Subject: Delay in receipt of information

1. The following facts are submitted for such action as the Secretary may deem appropriate.

a. April 1, 1948:

The Joint Intelligence Committee, U. S. Embassy, Moscow, completed an intensive study of Soviet Intentions "with the assistance of specialists in the various sections of the Embassy, including consultation with the Military, Naval and Air Attaches, who concurred in its findings."

b. April 2, 1948:

The Ambassador sent a summary of the report by telegram to the Department of State. This telegram did not reach the Central Intelligence Agency through normal channels. A copy was received, however, through the Central Intelligence Agency's direct liaison with the Secretary's office.

On the same date, copies of the report itself presumably were transmitted by the Military, Naval and Air Attaches in Moscow to their respective departments.

On the same date, the Ambassador transmitted five (5) copies of the report by pouch to the Department of State, - "three copies for the use of the Department, and one each for transmission by the Department, if it so desires, to the Department of Defense and to the Director of Central Intelligence."

c. April 13, 1948:

Copy No.1 of the report was received by the Office of the Under Secretary of State.

d. April, May, June, July 1948:

An ad hoc interdepartmental committee called by the Director of Intelligence, General Staff, U. S. Army, chairmanned by the Central Intelligence Agency, and which included a Department of

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State Department review completed

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State representative, carried out a continuing study of Soviet intentions. As far as is known, no member of this inter-departmental committee had access to the report from our Embassy in Moscow on the same subject.

a. July 30, 1948:

On this date, three and one-half months after it had been received by the Department of State, Copy No. 1 of the report was transmitted to the Central Intelligence Agency.

2. This delay has explosive possibilities. If it became known to critics, political or otherwise, of the Administration, it would be made to serve as an example of bungling and incompetence in the intelligence structure. Blame would be wide-spread, on the Department of State, the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, etc. It might be noted that hostilities with Russia might well have broken out during the three and a half month period, and it would be suggested that, bad as the inter-departmental liaison had been before Pearl Harbor, the situation in 1948 was far worse. The implications of such a possible criticism are obvious.

3. On a separate, though related subject, I should like to ask your assistance in resolving almost the same problem; i.e., that of being as nearly certain as possible that all intelligence information does, in fact, reach all of the persons who should have it. The various Congressional committee reports on the Pearl Harbor Investigation repeatedly stressed the fact that there was plenty of information in Washington at the time of Pearl Harbor, but that its dissemination was very much at fault. During the hearings on the National Security Act of 1947, the above point of inadequate dissemination of available intelligence was brought up time and time again. All of the executive departments or agencies would be in a very embarrassing position should an analogous situation come to light at any future time.

4. In each of the Departments information of intelligence value from foreign fields is normally received in and distributed by central communications centers and mailrooms. Distribution is apparently through three separate channels:

a. To Departmental Secretaries and Service Chiefs of Staff on a very restricted (Eyes Only) basis. No further distribution is made except by direction of senior officials in the offices of the Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff concerned.

b. To officials charged with operational supervision and action. Such officials apparently have final authority to determine whether further distribution shall be made for intelligence purposes.



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c. To the intelligence agencies of the Departments. In general there are definite indications that this immediate distribution frequently does not contain the information under a. and b. above.

5. To attempt to reach a "middle way" between the extremes (1) of being too inquisitive and seeing things not needed, and (2) of not getting some essential piece of information, the following procedure is suggested as a basis for discussion to get the answer to this question.

a. Properly qualified, cleared and selected Central Intelligence Agency representatives to be permitted to review the daily intake of all material not disseminated to departmental intelligence agencies to determine those items which may be of overall intelligence value.

b. Departmental Secretaries or their representatives to be authorized to restrict further dissemination by the Central Intelligence Agency of material not considered suitable for further dissemination when they may consider such restriction desirable.

R. H. HILLENKOETTER
Rear Admiral, USN
Director of Central Intelligence

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Distribution:

Orig. to Mr. George Kennan, State
2 cc - DCI

Note for record: See ER 0375, 7/22/48, conf. memo to DCI from Exe. for A&M, "Dissemination of intelligence information" w/2 encls - Ltr frm Mr. Armstrong, State, 7/19/48, ER 0382; Memo frm ICAPS 7/19/48, ER 0375.



